

press release

Bologna, 03 October 2018

“In good waters”: Hera's transparency on the water cycle

Tenth annual appointment with the Group's report on an essential service. The value of the multi-utility's investments in the sector continues to increase: over 156 million euro in 2017 compared to 130 million last year. Excellent quality of the resource supplied, guaranteed by over a million analyses, of which more than 134,000 in the Bologna region alone. To tell the story of the value of water, Hera invites citizens to a free theatrical performance with Fabio Volo. The show will début in Bologna Monday, 8 October and have encore performances in major cities

“In buone acque” turns 10 years old

It's the tenth birthday of the “In buone acque” report that Hera Group prepares to provide detailed and easy-to-read information on the water cycle it manages in 231 municipalities of Emilia-Romagna, Marche, and Triveneto.

As the second-largest operator in Italy by volume of water supplied (303 million m³ per year), Hera Group serves over 3.6 million citizens.

This report is for them, the everyday users of the water resources the multi-utility manages, to fully inform them on the quality of the water coming out of their taps; a quality that is ensured by strict monitoring.

This is proven by the number of analyses carried out last year throughout the company's entire service area: a total of over a million, more than 2,800 per day, on average.

The analyses, 38% of which were carried out in the Group's laboratories, also concerned the presence of pesticides and non-regulated aspects, such as emerging pollutants and asbestos fibres. Of the checks carried out, 99.9% yielded results compliant with regulatory limits, confirming the safety of the water Hera distributes.

Bologna's water: 134.000 quality assurance analyses

In 2017, over a million Bologna residents used a water resource the quality of which was certified by more than 134,000 analyses carried out in the laboratories of the Hera Group and the ASL (local public health authority).

The possibility of using tap water on a daily basis depends on the plant resources used by the company to distribute the service: in the Bologna area, tap water comes from 660 sources and travels through more than 9,000 km of aqueduct network, into which 108.4 million m³ of water are fed every year. This ensures a constant and adequate supply.

Hera: water-related investments 32% above the Italian average

Not only aqueduct but also purification and sewerage; managing the water service means taking care of the entire water cycle, meaning not only its distribution in homes but also the sewerage service and wastewater treatment. This is why the Hera Group has always focused most of its investments in the water sector: in 2017 they exceeded 156 million euro, compared to 130 million euro the previous year (+19%). More specifically, it invested 41% in the mains water network, 32% in the sewer system, and 27% in water treatment.

Compared to a national average of 37 euro invested per inhabitant, in the area served by the Hera Group investments in 2017 were about 49 euro per inhabitant. The magnitude of this commitment has allowed Hera to work on more than 35,000 km of its aqueduct network, about 18,600 km of sewerage, 469 water treatment plants and 422 production and drinking water purification plants. All this against a

USEFUL LINKS

www.gruppohera.it/report

[Explore the Group Water Channel of Hera Group](#)

[Check the label of the water in your city](#)

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cost of just two euro per thousand litres of tap water, about half of what consumers pay in other European nations.

“In Good Waters”: the economic and environmental benefits of tap water consumption

Safe and healthy, but also economical, close and ecological: there are 5 good reasons to drink tap water. The report dwells on the benefits to consumers of drinking mains water.

In a country like Italy, which ranks third in the world and first in Europe for per capita consumption of bottled mineral water, local action by the company, reinforced by good practice by citizens, can help to bring about important changes, starting with reducing plastic bottles.

Just think that last year an average of one million plastic bottles were sold every minute in the world, about 20,000 per second. In 2017, in Hera's service area, 35% of consumers chose tap water over bottled water for drinking. By doing so they helped to avoid the production, transport, and disposal of 250 million plastic bottles (which would fill over 100,000 bins) and the related CO₂ emissions.

As for the economic benefits, the choice of drinking tap water instead of bottled mineral water allows a household of three to save up to 300 euro a year because 1,000 litres of tap water cost on average only 2.18 euro. The quality of the water Hera distributes is high: low in minerals and sodium, convenient because it reaches our homes directly, and safe.

Hera is ahead of EU targets

With a view to increasing transparency and proximity to its customers, back in 2009, Hera launched several information campaigns on the water service, also involving the local public health authority and the regional government. It also launched “In Good Waters”, now at its tenth edition, and some time ago started adding the water quality label in its bills, created a dedicated web area, and made the free Acquologo app.

These initiatives anticipate by far the objectives set by the European Commission with its legislative proposal, introduced in February 2018: improving access to water for everybody, updating drinking water quality standards and raising consumer awareness. According to the Commission, increased awareness will increase confidence in tap water, informing citizens about its quality and safety. The measures will reduce the number of people exposed to health risks from drinking water (from 20 million, 4% of EU residents, to 4.7–4.1 million, less than 1% of residents), a 17% reduction in bottled water consumption compared to 2015 (with a corresponding reduction in plastic pollution and related CO₂ emissions of 1.2 million tonnes, in line with the indications of the European Union's Plastic Strategy) and will save European citizens 600 million euro per year (due to the consumption of tap water replacing bottled water).

The report is available on paper and on line

“In Good Waters” contains a lot of detailed information: all the values of the quality of the water resource, relating to the average concentrations measured, broken down by area. The detailed report is already available on-line at www.gruppohera.it/report and a summary containing the main data will soon be available in paper form at the Hera Group's branch offices. The full version of the report has been verified by the independent certification body DNV GL.

“In Good Waters” adds to the other tools the Group has developed to continuously inform citizens in an easy-to-understand way about the quality of water and of the water service: the water label on the bill, the dedicated channel on the Group's website and the Aquologist: Hera's free app that easily and rapidly shows the current average values of tap water quality, can send water meter readings by smartphone or provide prompt notification in the event of an interruption of the water service for scheduled works.

Hera puts water on stage, with Fabio Volo, to show how valuable it is

Confirming its commitment to inform citizens in the best possible way about the importance of water, the Hera Group also decided to offer them a theatrical performance, created specifically for this purpose, performed by Fabio Volo and Gianumberto Accinelli, who curated the script.

The show is entitled “Volo sull'acqua” (Flight over water/Volo on water) and will be staged between October and November in the theatres of the main cities served by the Group. The first show will take place in Bologna, on Monday, 8 October, at the Duse Theatre. Admission is free, subject to availability. More information and the schedule on: www.gruppohera.it

Fogacci: “Informing citizens to make them aware and involved”

“The ten years of “In Good Waters”, says Franco Fogacci, Director of Water at Hera, confirm our desire to keep residents fully informed on the quality of the water they use every day and on the complex operation of the integrated water system, a system on which the Hera Group is committed every day to ensuring a continuous and efficient service. Only through adequate information, in fact, citizens can become aware of the importance of this precious resource and share with us actions that promote respect and protection.”

